United Nations S/PV.3775

Security Council

Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3775th Meeting
Thursday, 8 May 1997, 1 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Park	(Republic of Korea)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Wang Xuexian
	Costa Rica	Mr. Sáenz Biolley
	Egypt	Mr. Awaad
	France	Mr. Thiebaud
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Tanaka
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Mr. Matuszewski
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Sweden	Mr. Osvald
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Richmond
	United States of America	Mr. Wood

Agenda

The situation in Croatia

Letter dated 29 April 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/343)

97-85536 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Croatia

Letter dated 29 April 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/343)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Croatia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Simonović (Croatia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1997/343, which contains the text of a letter dated 29 April 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council. I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/348, which contains the text of a letter dated 2 May 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, drawing attention to the statement on the elections in Croatia issued by the European Union on 30 April 1997.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the letter of the Secretary-General of 29 April 1997 (S/1997/343), which conveys the conclusions of the Transitional Administrator regarding the successful holding of the elections in the region of Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium in the Republic of Croatia beginning on 13 April 1997, under the direction of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES).

"The Security Council shares the assessment of the Transitional Administrator that the holding of these elections has been an essential step for further progress in the peaceful reintegration of the region and marks an important milestone for the legitimate representation of the local population in the Croatian constitutional and legal system. It urges early formation of the newly elected bodies of local government and prompt and full implementation of the undertakings contained in the Basic Agreement (S/1995/951, annex) and the letter from the Government of Croatia of 13 January 1997 (S/1997/27, annex), including the establishment of the Joint Council of Municipalities and the appointment of local Serbs to the guaranteed positions in the parliamentary and administrative structures of Croatia.

"The Security Council underlines the Transitional Administrator's finding that no intimidation, violence or electoral improprieties were observed or reported before, during or after the elections. The Council welcomes the good-will and sense of cooperation demonstrated by the parties to the process.

"The Security Council emphasizes the importance of the two-way return of all displaced persons in Croatia, as well as the right of residents of a State to choose freely where they wish to live. In this context, it welcomes the Agreement of the Joint Working Group on the Operational Procedures of Return (S/1997/341, annex). It urges the Government of Croatia strictly to implement this Agreement. The Council calls upon both sides to cooperate in good faith on the basis of the Basic Agreement and stresses the need to respect human rights, including rights of persons belonging to minorities, throughout the country, in order to ensure the success of the process of reintegration.

"The Security Council expresses its appreciation to UNTAES and to those elements of the international community, including observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe and members of

the diplomatic community, whose efforts made possible the successful holding of elections. The Council commends UNTAES for resolving technical difficulties by taking decisive actions, which contributed significantly to the successful holding of the elections.

"The Security Council looks forward to the recommendations of the Secretary-General, in the light of the parties' progress towards fulfilling the Basic Agreement, for the further United Nations presence in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, possibly a restructured UNTAES, consistent with the fulfilment of the Basic Agreement, for the six-month period beginning from 16 July 1997, in accordance with its resolution 1079 (1996)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/26.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.